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T H E

SCHOOL for CHRISTIANS,

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D I A L O G U E S,

F O R T H E

U S E O F C H I L D R E N.

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B Y

MISS BROOKE.

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MANUFACTURED IN 18209

THE FOOLSCAP



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but surely, in a Christian country, it will be admitted, that much—much more is necessary. Christians should surely, be taught to know *why* they are distinguished by that name:—and Christian parents should wish to have their children instructed in the reasons and nature of that religion which they themselves profess.

It is, however, an obvious, and a lamentable truth, that few *are* thus instructed;—and perhaps the cause may exist less in fault, than in misfortune. Even if it could be admitted that there was not a parent to be found, either too uninformed, too gay, or too indolent for such a task:—were all alike well instructed themselves, and capable, and desirous of communicating the same knowledge to their children:—still, too many are *compelled* to neglect it, by the cruel necessities of circumstance, business, or situation;—besides that, indeed, children of lively capacities will often put questions which it is extremely

tremely difficult to answer, on the *instant*, in a manner suited to the comprehension of that early period of life.

The Author of this little tract, was blessed with a parent, whose mind was knowledge, and whose heart was virtue; who stooped to the capacity of her infant years, and replied with unwearyed condescension, to the teizing inquisitiveness of childhood. Recollection now serves to remind her of those answers, and that mode of instruction, which conveyed knowledge by the means of sensible images, to her mind: and, from her own experience of the efficacy, and excellence of this plan, she naturally wishes to communicate its utility to others. Let this acknowledgement acquit her of the presumption of pretending to offer *her own* wisdom—*her own* instructions to the world.

Her only object, in this publication, is, the happiness of seeing it become useful

to her species, and the pleasure of bestowing the profits of the book, on the enlargement of a little plan she has formed, for the charitable education of children whose parents are too poor to afford them the means of instruction.

DIA.

# DIALOGUES.

## DIALOGUE I.

**PATERNUS, FILIOLUS.**

**FILIOLUS.**

**GOOD** morrow, papa.

*Patern.* Good morrow, my love,—What is the matter? your eyes look red.

*Filio.* Oh, papa!—that story you were telling me, out of the Bible, last night, made me so melancholy!—I could not help crying to think what a pity it was of Adam and Eve, to grow so naughty, after God had made them so good!—I was thinking of it all night.—But, papa, why did God let them be so naughty, and do themselves so much harm?—Sure he could have hindered them, if he pleased, from eating that nasty tree!

*Pat.* He could.

*Fil.* And why didn't he, then?

*Pat.* Because he created them with a free will, my dear.

*Fil.* What's that, papa?

*Pat.* Why, he put it in their power to think of what they pleased, and have a mind to whatever they pleased.

*Fil.* But why did he, then?—Why didn't he hinder them from having a mind to be naughty?

*Pat.* If God had given them no choice, they could not have chosen good, any more than bad, and could no more have loved or served God, or been capable of happiness, than this stupid stick.—Tell me, do you love this stick?

*Fil.* Oh!—papa,—you make me laugh;—is it love a stick?

*Pat.* And why not?

*Fil.* Why sure, because the stick can't love me.

*Pat.* Do you love your dog?

*Fil.* O yes, very much indeed.

*Pat.* And why?

*Fil.* Because he loves me in his heart, papa.

*Pat.* Have you any other reason, besides this, for loving him?

*Fil.* O yes, for he diverts me, and comes when I call him, and carries me about, and does every thing that I bid him.

*Pat.* And are not you as much obliged to your stick?—You have it whenever you please, and you play with it, and ride upon it, as well as you do upon Pompey.

*Fil.*

*Fil.* Aye, but no thanks to the stick, though: the stick does not care a pin for me: it won't come when I call it, like Pompey; I must go and fetch it, when I want it, papa: sure it is not out of good nature it carries me about, like Pompey! the stick can't help itself, or hinder me, but Pompey could hinder me, if he had a mind, and for all that, he does every thing, that I bid him, out of his own good will, and because he loves me.

*Pat.* Very well, and so, you will love the dog, and you won't love the stick, although the stick should divert you as much as the dog.

*Fil.* Yes, that's what I say, papa.

*Pat.* And for this reason, because Pompey has a will of his own, and makes use of it to love you, and leaves every one else, to follow you, and does every thing you bid him, of his own good will, although he may let it alone, if he pleases.—But the stick has no feeling, no will, or choice of its own, and therefore can't chuse to love you, or do any thing for you; it does nothing for you, but what you *make* it do, and you are not a bit obliged to it for that.—Is not this the case?

*Fil.* Yes, papa.

*Pat.* Well, you don't love the stick, and you do love Pompey.—Is there any one you love better than Pompey?

*Fil.* O yes, indeed.—I love you a hundred and a hundred times better.

*Pat.*

*Pat.* And why?

*Fil.* Because sure, no dog can love me as you can.

*Pat.* Why so?

*Fil.* Because a dog can't have sense to know any thing like you, papa.

*Pat.* You answer very right: but remember, now, what you have said: the reason why the stick cannot make itself agreeable to you, is because it has no power or will at all:—the reason the dog can make himself agreeable to you, is, because he is not powerless, like the stick, but has some degree of will and choice, which enables him to chuse to love you: and the reason that I can be more agreeable to you than either, is, because I have a great deal more power and will, and therefore can serve you more, and love you better than any dog in the world. Now tell me, do you want to be more loved, and better served than God?

*Fil.* Oh! papa! sure I did not say such a naughty thing as that.

*Pat.* But you said the same thing, when you wanted Adam and Eve to have been made without any will of their own; for then, they would have been worse than the dog, and as stupid and senseless as the stick.

*Fil.* Oh! now I see what you mean, papa. Sure enough, its very true, I wanted God to make a stick of poor Adam;—I wanted a stick

to

to serve God, although a dog, that is so much better than a stick, would not serve me. But, you know, I am only a poor silly child, papa ; so, I hope God will forgive me, and make me wiser!—May I ask any more questions, papa ?

*Pat.* You may indeed, my love : I am ready to answer them.

*Fil.* I'll say no more about our *thoughts* papa ; but, could not God make us *do* whatever he pleased ?

*Pat.* He could, at—*thinking* (M. A. 1.)

*Fil.* And why doesn't he always make us *do* good then ?

*Pat.* Suppose Pompey, here, was to take it in his head to hate, instead of loving you ; and that he would not come, as he does now, when you call him, nor *do* any thing you bid him, nor carry you about, as he used to do.

*Fil.* O, I would be sorry for that.

*Pat.* But then you could *make* him do a great deal : you could beat him, and drag him along.

*Fil.* Aye, but I would not do that ; I would rather not have him at all, than do that, for it would only make him hate me more : besides, I love to see him merry, and happy : I could not bear to have him always dismal and surly, and to be beating and making him howl. Oh, aye, and then he'd be worse than the stick, because he'd *do* nothing but what he was *forced* to *do*, and

and it would be harder to *make* him do things than the stick : besides, if he didn't do it of his own good will, I wouldn't give a pin for it.

*Pat.* And why then, do you wish God to force the service of his creatures, when you would not like to force the service of your dog ? or why should you think that God could be pleased with service done against our will, when you would not care a pin, as you say, for Pompey's service, if it was done against his will ?

*Fil.* My gracious !—its very true indeed !—what a fool I was, not to think of that before ! Sure I am verry happy to have such a dear good papa, who is so wise, and so ready to tell me every thing that I want to know.

## DIALOGUE II.

### FILIOLOUS.

**P**APA, I was thinking since, of all that you said last ; but still there is one thing that I forgot to ask you about. Pray, when God knew that Adam and Eve might do themselves a mischief, by eating that terrible tree, why did he leave it in their way ? why didn't he root it up, and throw it out of Paradise ? Though God should not *force* them to do even what was good, sure he

he might have saved them from doing what was bad ;—mighthn't he, papa !

*Pat.* Suppose you were going to tell a lie, and that I was to tie up your tongue, or stop your mouth : I should then save you from telling the lie, but I could not save you from wickedness, because you would have told it, only that you were forced to hold your tongue.

*Fil.* Very true indeed, I see very well that God did every thing right ; Adam and Eve, to be sure, were a sad naughty couple, but still—poor creatures ! papa.

*Pat.* Aye, poor creatures ! indeed ! but it was all their own faults.

*Fil.* I know that, but,—suppose now—O papa ! if God had contrived it some other way !

*Pat.* And how would you have had him contrive it !

*Fil.* I don't know, indeed, papa.—But now, after all, if Adam and Eve had had no free will, they could not have made a bad use of it ; and since they *did* make a bad use of it, would not they have been better without it ?—would not they have been better off, to be stupid, than miserable, papa ?

*Pat.* Let me ask you one question :—are you sorry you were born with legs and feet ?

*Fil.* No sure, papa.

*Pat.* O but, since you make a bad use of them, would

would it not have been better if you had been born without them? You got a sad fall, the other day by leaping, contrary to my desire, and hurt your leg very much: if you had had no legs, you would not have gotten that fall.

*Fil.* Yes, but then, papa, I should not be able to stand, or walk, without legs and feet, and that would be a great deal worse than the fall:—besides, you know, I may walk, and leap too, without getting falls, if I take care, and don't go into dangerous places, where you forbid me to go. It was not my feet, but my foolishness, that made me get that fall.

*Pat.* Just so, it was the foolishness of Adam and Eve, and not their free will, which made them get their fall: they need not have fallen, any more than you, if they had followed advice, and taken care.—Do you remember the pain you felt, when the dust got into your eyes?

*Fil.* O yes, very well.

*Pat.* Did that make you wish you had been born without eyes?

*Fil.* No indeed, far from it, papa.

*Pat.* You cut your finger, last week, by handling a knife carelessly: are not you sorry you were not born without hands? If you had had no hands, you would not have cut your finger.—In short, you meet with so many accidents of late, that, according to your plan, I had better serve your body something in the same

same way as you wanted God to serve the minds of Adam and Eve: Shut you up in a room, set you sitting down, and tie up your feet, that you may get no more falls, and your hands, that you may not handle knives, to cut your fingers, and your tongue, that you may not tell a lie; and last of all, put a hankerchief over your eyes, that no more dust may get into them.—Then you will be quite safe and happy,—wont you?

*Fil.* O no, no, papa dear! don't do that!

*Pat.* What then, you would rather have your feet at liberty, though you did get a fall by using them foolishly.

*Fil.* O yes indeed, a great deal.

*Pat.* By the same rule then, it was better for Adam and Eve to have their *will* at liberty, though they got their fall by using that foolishly.

*Fil.* O but stay, papa!—did Adam and Eve ever get back into Paradise?

*Pat.* No.

*Fil.* Then sure their fall was a great deal worse than mine; for the hurt that I got did not last long, and so, did not signify much; but the mischief their fall did them, lasted all their lives.

*Pat.* Well, suppose then, that the mischief of your fall, as well as that of theirs, was to last as long as life,—suppose that instead of only hurting your leg, you had broken it, in such a manner, as never to be cured, and that you

could expect nothing better than to go limping while you lived.

*Fil.* Oh, that would be very sad indeed!

*Pat.* It would be an uncomfortable situation, I allow; but let us also, for a while, suppose, that it was the same with your legs, as with Adam's free will, and that it was impossible for you to go to heaven without them.

*Fil.* O, if that were the case, papa, I'd be sorry to be without them indeed. I'd rather go limping, or any way, to heaven, than not to go there at all.

*Pat.* Then, for the same reason, it would surely be better for Adam and Eve to bear, all their lives, with the mischief of their fall, than to be born without free will, and to lose heaven for the want of it.

*Fil.* O, now I see it all quite plain, papa:— Sure enough, one might as well not be born at all, as not to have their will at liberty.

*Pat.* Certainly, for we should be born to no purpose, without it.

*Fil.* None indeed, if we could not go to heaven, because I see now that even in this world we could have no comfort, if we had no choice.

*Pat.* No, nor in the world to come either. You could neither love me here, nor God hereafter. If you had no choice, you could not chuse the good from the bad, nor prefer the company

of angels, to the company of stocks and stones ; and it would be as impossible for you to expect any happiness from heaven, as for a man who had neither sight, or smell, to expect any pleasure from a garden of the sweetest flowers.

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### D I A L O G U E III.

#### FILIOLOUS.

PAPA, I want greatly to know why we are not all born good, and pretty, and happy, just such as you told me Adam and Eve were, before they grew naughty ? You told me they never would have felt sickness, or pain, if they had not list'ned to the devil. Now sure, one can't listen to the devil before they are born. They say I was very sick and had like to die, when I was only a week old. Sure I was too young then to be naughty, papa :—why then was not I born pretty and happy, and free from all pain and sickness, like good Adam and Eve, when I did nothing that I deserved to be punished for ?

*Pat.* I will explain that matter to you, my dear. As we are all the children of Adam and Eve, so we must be born like them. Now Adam had no children, till after he was naughty and lost his first nature ; and for that reason, we must all be born like poor naughty Adam : for a

child cannot but be the same sort of creature as its parent ; just as every tree must have fruit of its own kind ; and you might as well expect to see peaches growing on a crab-tree, as that we should be born more perfect creatures than Adam and Eve were, when they became our parents.

*Fil.* O aye, papa, and that puts me in mind of poor Arthriticus, when we went to see him, the time he had the gout so bad, and sent for the doctor.—You know he was very impatient, and said how it was very hard to be tormented in such a way, and that he did nothing in the world to deserve it, and wondered that God Almighty would plague him so ; but the doctor, I thought, made him a mighty good answer, papa.

*Pat.* What was that ? do you recollect it ?

*Fil.* I forget the very words, papa ; but I know, he told him how his father and grandfather were too fond of eating and drinking what was not good for them, and that they made themselves sick, and got the gout ; and he said how the gentleman might very well see, that he got his gout from them, because it ran in the blood ; and that he should not be blaming Heaven for it, but strive to keep from doing the things that brought the disorder into his family.

*Pat.* Well, and did he say nothing else to the gentleman ?

*Fil.*

*Fil.* O yes ; he said how he would give him physic, which would cure him, for that time ; and that he would lay down rules for him to live by ; and he told him how all the doctors in the world would not signify a pin, without he minded the rules, and resolved to keep from doing any thing that could make the disorder grow bad again.

*Pat.* Very well remembered, indeed ; and just so it is with every human creature. It is the busines of us all to do our best, by living according to the rules which God, (our heavenly Physician) has given us, to try and get rid of those bad passions of anger, hatred, pride, self-will, and the rest, which the fall of our first parents has caused to run in our bloods, and in our hearts.

*Fil.* But, papa, the Bible says that God told Adam he should die, if he eat the forbidden fruit. Sure he didn't die that time, papa ; did he ?

*Pat.* The law tells us that if we are found out in murder, or thest, we shall die for it. Now, though a man is not put to death, on the very instant he is found out, yet still the law tells truth ; because in the end, and when a certain time is elapsed, the sentence is executed against him. If Adam had never sinned, he would never have died. Sin made him mortal,

or subject to death, and therefore God told him the truth.

But, besides this, our first parents did really die, (though not the same kind of death which we die,) on the very day, the very instant in which they sinned. They were created by God in the nature of immortals, and clothed with bodies that were not subject to death, but calculated to live for ever: therefore, when sin introduced mortality into their frames, it was surely death, for their pure and heavenly nature died within them; the immortal nature of their bodies died, and left them nothing, in its stead, but poor perishable bodies of imperfection, infirmity, and pain. But they suffered another death, that was still worse than this; for goodness died in their hearts, and all happiness went with it.

When they were first created, they were happy, because they were good; they knew nothing but innocence and virtue; they blessed God, as their maker, and thanked him as the giver of all which they possessed. But the devil envied them their happiness; he tempted them to disobey their maker, and put it into their heads that he had dealt unkindly by them, and only wanted to keep the tree of knowledge from them, for fear it would make them as great as himself. So, they believed the devil, rather than God; and they no longer took a pleasure in thanking their

their Creator for his goodness, but they grew conceited, and proud, and ungrateful ; and they wanted to live without God in the world, and to set themselves up to be as wise, and as great as he was. They were not satisfied to remain as he made them, but quarrelled with his command for keeping them even from what he told them would be death. So, they took their desire ; they broke the command of God ; they eat the forbidden fruit, and then they found, when it was too late, how much better it had been for them, if they had believed, and obeyed their Maker : for the change that they felt in their bodies soon made them know that, instead of glorious creatures who were formed to live forever, they were become poor wretched mortals, subject to pain, sickness, and death ; and instead of finding themselves lords of the world, they were become the slaves of almost every thing in, and belonging to it ; for the fire had power to burn, and the water to drown them ; the sun was permitted to scorch, and the cold blast to freeze them ; in short, those things which, before, had been their servants, were then become their lords.

But their minds suffered a change infinitely worse than that which happened to their bodies ; for then it was that goodness died in their hearts, and the devil entered into them, and filled them with all his own frightful passions of wrath, and hatred,

hatred, strife, envy, and despair :—by taking the advice of the devil, they put themselves under his command, and into his power ; and they had, then, no other prospect, but to live with him in everlasting burnings, in the hell to which he wanted to carry them.

*Fil.* O papa ! papa ! that's very terrible indeed ! Oh, why did God punish them so terribly ?—You told me that God loved every body, as well as you love me ;—now, sure, if I was to commit a fault, you would not punish me for it, all my life, papa : you would only whip me, and make me ask pardon.

*Pat.* Well, to pursue your own argument now.—Suppose that something poisonous lay in your way, and that the poison was so pretty to look at, and so sweet to the taste, that I had reason to be affraid of your eating it. In that case, I should certainly warn you of it, as God warned Adam of the forbidden fruit : I would tell you that it was my positive desire, you should not so much as touch it, for that if you did, it would poison you, and make you die before your time. Suppose then,—after all the reason you have to depend on my word, that I would not tell you a lie ; and on my affection for you, which must ever make me wish for your happiness ;—suppose, after all this, that you were tempted, by the beauty of the poison, to draw near, and then to touch, and lastly, to taste it ;

and

and that, in consequence of doing so, you grew very sick, and got pains all over your body, and grew so altered in your looks, that no one would know you again ;—besides being certain that the disorder would last while you lived, and would soon bring you to a very painful death.—This would be a sad punishment, you will allow ; but, after all, who would be to blame for it ?—which would you lay the fault on yourself, or on me ?

*Fil.* On myself, to be sure, papa.

*Pat.* And if, besides this, your temper was as much changed as your constitution ;—if the nature of the poison was such as to infect your mind with fretfulness, and wickedness, with hatred, and anger, and envy, and every bad passion ; you would then be compleatly miserable indeed ; but still, you could not say it was I who made you so :—on the contrary, every person of common sense must own that you alone would be in fault, and no one would be silly enough to say of me, as you said of God, just now—“ Oh why did this father punish his child so terribly ?”

*Fil.* Indeed papa, it was very foolish of me to say so, but I was so sorry for poor Adam and Eve. Oh, what a pity it was that they list’ned to the devil ! sure, they might have trusted the word of God, after all the good things that he gave them !

*Pat.*

*Pat.* They might, and ought, indeed, my love: but their children should take warning by their punishment, and strive to avoid their crimes.

*Fil.* Why sure, papa, we don't eat the forbidden fruit?

*Pat.* But we do the same thing whenever we disobey any command of God. The reasons why Adam and Eve were disobedient, are these; first, because the fruit was tempting in itself.—Now, we are guilty of the very same fault, whenever we indulge our appetites, at the expence of either health, or duty.—The second reason was, pride, and conceit; they wanted to be independent of God, and to be able to do without him:—Just the same crime every man is guilty of, when he conceits he can do without God's assistance, or thinks that any thing can make him happy, which is not pleasing to God;—and the third reason of their trespasses, was ingratitude, which made them forget all the benefits of their good and merciful Creator, while they disobeyed his commands, and wanted to get away from his authority, and power.—This is justly considered as the worst part of their fault; for ingratitude shews a badness of heart, that is very shocking, indeed.—Shocking as it is, however, too many in this world are guilty of it, themselves, while they blame their first parents for it.—If we remembered, and loved, as we ought

ought to do, that God who gave us life, and keeps us in health, and provides us with every good thing we possess,—we should not then be weary of his authority, or ever forget his commandments.

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## DIALOGUE IV.

FILIOCUS.

PAPA, I want sadly to know what became of Adam and Eve, after their fall?

*Pat.* What could you expect to become of them, naughty creatures as they were? Suppose now, that you took up a poor beggar boy, out of the street, and fed and clothed him, and taught him his prayers and catechism, and did every thing in your power to make him both good and happy:—you would, then, very naturally, expect that this little boy should be sensible of your kindness, and shew his gratitude, by loving you with all his heart, and serving you as well as he was able.—But suppose that, instead of doing so, you found out that he grew ungrateful for all your benefits, careless in your service, and neglectful of your advice; and that, at last, he even went so far as to join with your enemies against you, and strive to plunder you of

of all your property :—what would you think of him then ?

*Fil.* Oh, papa, why I would think him a wicked, nasty, ill-natured creature, and it would be impossible that ever I could care for him any more.

*Pat.* How then should you expect that God could care for Adam and Eve, any more ?—All the benefits that you could confer, are nothing in comparison of what they received from God ; yet, after all this, they rebelled against him ; they slighted his goodness, scorned his service, joined with his enemy, the devil, and wanted to strip their Creator of his prerogative, and become his rival in power.

*Fil.* And did God never forgive them, papa ? Did he send them to hell, for being so naughty ?

*Pat.* God never sends any one to hell, my dear : God is all love, and he does every thing that a wise, good and powerful Being can do, to hinder his creatures from going there. But, if they will go, in spite of all this, what is then to be done ?—Such, you see, was the case of Adam and Eve ; they gave up, and forsook their God, and chose to follow the devil :—Now, the devil always leads to hell : we all know that :—The Bible assures us of it, over and over again ; so, we have none but ourselves to blame, when we chuse to follow a guide, who, we know, will lead us to destruction.

Adam

Adam and Eve, when they were good, might have kept themselves so, if they pleased, by refusing to listen to the devil, or to let him into their hearts: but, when once they did let him in, they were not able to turn him out again: there was no Being, either in heaven, or on earth, who was able to do this for them, but one, and that was God,—the God whom they had forsaken, despised, and disobeyed;—what then could they hope for?—How could they expect that he should any longer continue to care for wretches who had been so base and ungrateful for all his mercies?

*Fil.* Indeed it is very true, papa; it would be too much to hope for, and they were too wicked to deserve forgiveness.

*Pat.* I am glad you are sensible of that, at last; because you will now hear with the greater wonder and admiration, of an escape so unexpected, and mercy so unmerited as our first parents then experienced.

*Fil.* Oh, papa!—and did they escape?—Oh, I am so glad!—tell me all about it, dear, dear papa!

*Pat.* God, who loves his creatures, with a love far greater than that of any earthly parents for their children;—God looked upon Adam and Eve in their distress;—he saw they had no power to help themselves; he saw that the devil had fast hold of them, and was dragging them to

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his own place of torment, and that there was none who could deliver them out of his hands :— he saw all this, and he pitied their misery ; and instead of adding to it, by his anger, he determined to save them from the effects of their folly ; and, not only forgive them what was past, but put it in their power, besides, to become good, and happy, once more.

*Fil.* Oh, papa, papa ! that was a good God !— Oh, how could God be so good, when Adam and Eve were so naughty ?—but, in what manner did he save them, that time ?—What did he say, what did he do to them, papa ?

*Pat.* After they had transgressed, and began to perceive the effects of what they had done, God saw the misery of their situation, and he had compassion on them ; and he called them out, from among the trees of the garden, where they were striving to hide themselves, foolishly forgetting that nothing can be hidden from the eyes of heaven ; so, they came out from behind the trees, trembling, and confused (as you will find in the Bible here) and alledged, in their excuse, that they found themselves naked, and not fit to appear in the presence of God :—they found themselves stripped of their pure and immortal bodies, and left in all the nakedness of a body of shame, and corruption. Now, God knew, as well as they did, every thing that had befallen them ; but he wanted to convict them,

out

out of their own mouths ; and he, therefore, asked them, who had told them that they were naked, or what was the sudden alteration which made them unfit to appear !—They then confessed what they had done, but still strove to throw the blame from themselves ;—Adam laid the fault upon Eve's advice, and Eve laid the fault upon the serpent's advice ;—but they were soon made sensible of the crime of minding the advice of any creature, more than the command of God :—God shewed them the guilt of their disobedience, and pointed out all the terrible consequences which that guilt would bring upon them, and upon all their children.—However, when he had convinced them of their crime, and saw them silenced in his presence, and overwhelmed with shame and despair ; he then began to comfort, and talk kindly to them.

Suppose yourself, now, in the same situation of Adam and Eve, at that time, and think how much you would have been affected with gratitude, wonder, and joy, if—in the moment when you despaired of all relief, and saw hell opening to receive you—if, in that moment, the God, whom you had offended, began to speak graciously to you, and said, “ Never fear, my poor “ Adam ! though you were so naughty, I love “ you still !—You are now sensible that I told “ you truth, and that the devil deceived you :— “ that I loved, and wanted you to be happy,

“ and that he hated, and wanted you to be  
 “ miserable.—You would not believe this, in  
 “ time, poor foolish Adam ! and now the devil  
 “ has hold of you, and is dragging you to his  
 “ own place, and you can’t help yourself, for  
 “ he is stronger than you. But I will help you,  
 “ my poor Adam ! I will help you to fight  
 “ against the Devil ; and all the children you  
 “ shall have, I will help them too, as much  
 “ as ever they chuse.”—What would you  
 think, if such discourse, and such merciful pro-  
 mises were made to you, by that God whom  
 you had offended, and justly expected to heap  
 indignation and punishments on your head ?

*Fil.* O papa ! I would fall down on my knees, and thank such a dear good God, with all my heart and soul!—and then, papa—I would get up again, so stout and strong, with the thoughts of so great a help, that I am sure, I never would let the devil have power over me, any more.—But, papa, did God say all this to Adam ?

*Pat.* We are not told that he made use of the very words I have used ; but the Bible informs us, that he promised the same thing, nay, and much more, when he said that the “ seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head.”

*Fil.* But how did that mean the same thing as what you said, papa ?

*Pat*

*Pat.* I will explain it all to you, bye and bye;—at present, it is better to go on in course, and shew you how he began the performance of his promise, even on the *instant* when he *made* it.—In that instant, he put his own strong and holy spirit into their hearts, and commissioned him to stay with them, as long as ever they pleased; and he told them that while ever they list'ned to his good advice, accepted his help, and had confidence in his love and power, the devil would be afraid to come near, and quite unable to hurt them: but, on the contrary, if they once neglected this good spirit's advice, then the devil, who is always on the watch, would instantly approach, and deceive them again, to their destruction. He further told them, that, if they always did as the good spirit directed, he would carry them to heaven, when they died; but if they list'ned to the devil, he would certainly drag them along with himself to hell.

*Fil.* Well, and they always minded to listen to the good spirit—did'nt they?

*Pat.* I hope so, my dear; but their children are not always so wise.—We are all born into this world, just the same creatures as Adam and Eve were, at that time. We have, all of us, two strong spirits contending for the dominion of our hearts: one is the Holy Spirit of God, and the other is the frightful and malicious spirit

of the devil: they are both perpetually busy, in striving to persuade us to what they would have us do, and we are at liberty to listen to which we please; but, whenever we are naughty, we then are helping the devil to destroy us;—and, whenever we are good, we are then helping the good Spirit to make us happy, and carry us to heaven when we die.

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## DIALOGUE V.

## FILIOLOUS.

PAPA, I was thinking a great deal of what you told me last; and I am determined, I never will be naughty again, as long as ever I live.

*Pat.* A very good resolution, my love; but how will you be able to keep it?

*Fil.* Why—papa!—Sure I may do as I please?—Is not that what you call my free will?

*Pat.* No, no; your free will only enables you to think and desire what you please.

*Fil.* Well, I will desire to be good, then.

*Pat.* And that is going a great way towards it, I assure you; but not *all* the way.

*Fil.* How is that, papa?—I don't understand you.

*Pat.* Suppose that Adam, before his fall, had had power to quench the light of the sun; and that the devil had told him, he might, by so doing,

doing, become wiser and greater than he was, and have a much better light of his own, than that of the luminary which God had given him.—Suppose him foolish and vain enough to try the experiment, expecting, from the extinction of the sun, the same independent greatness, which he expected from eating the tree of knowledge of good and evil; and finding in the end his expectations all baffled, and himself left to the darkness of nature, unenlightened by God.—He would then, to be sure, be very sorry for what was done; he would be as glad to have the light back again, as you would to grow good; but both you and he might wish, and wish forever, without having the power to procure the objects of your wishes.—Adam, in spight of all his wishes, might, for any thing he could do, remain in darkness, while he lived; and his children would, of course, be in equal darkness, though of equal inclination to remove it: because, that God who alone had power, at first, to kindle up the light of the sun, he alone could have the power of restoring it again, after the folly of his creature had quenched it. Now, though Adam and Eve did not put out the light of the sun; yet they put out a light which was of much greater consequence to them. In search of their fancied knowledge and greatness, they extinguished the light of goodness in their hearts; and God who gave, and alone could give, that

that light, was alone able to rekindle it. Thus it is, you see, that all your will, and wishes to become good, can be of no avail to make you so, without the assistance of God.—We have no goodness but what we receive from him.—Still, however, our desire of being good, is a great help to our being so :—first, because we could not be made either perfect or happy, against our will; and secondly, because that God never yet refused his grace to any one who sincerely desired, and strove to obtain it.—Since God alone, then, is able to make you good, you ought to pray to him often, and earnestly, that he would strengthen his Holy Spirit within you; for if he was to see you wicked, careless, and neglectful, and that he was to grow tired of helping you, and to leave you, once, to yourself, you would then be lost forever; and neither your own strength, nor the strength of all the world could save you.

*Fil.* But sure, he would not grow tired of helping me !

*Pat.* Not if he saw you willing to help yourself, and, at the same time, humble enough to see that your own strength was not sufficient.

For example, now,—here, I pay masters, to instruct you in several branches of knowledge:—your free will, as you say, may make you wish to learn;—but you know that wishing alone won't do, without you also strive to learn. Your

masters

masters are all very ready to help you, but all won't do, if you refuse or neglect to add your own endeavours to their instructions:—this is absolutely necessary, though not *all* that is necessary; for something more would still be wanting, to make you learn cleverly, and that is, humility. If you once took it into your head that you were able to do every thing by yourself, you would then neglect your masters; they, of course, would grow tired of teaching a conceited fool, and leave you to yourself; and then, you would find, too late, that neither your wishes nor endeavours would signify any thing, without the help that my fondness was willing to procure for you.

In like manner, you must not only *wish* to obey the commands of God, but you must also *strive*. You must not be weary of resisting the temptations of the devil, and of helping the good Spirit to get the better of him:—and you must, also, take care not to grow conceited, nor depend upon your own strength, for fear God should serve you, as I have supposed your masters to do, and leave you to your own weakness and folly.

*Fil.* All that is very plain, now, papa, and I understand it mighty well;—but I want to know, why must we pray?—God, you say, knows every thing; sure, then, he fees when I have a mind to be good; he knows all that I

want

want and wish for, and when he does, why should I ask him?

*Pat.* Suppose that I, also, knew all your worldly wants, and was very willing to bestow upon you every thing, in reason, which you wished for :—would that be any excuse for your coming, and rudely taking your choice, without so much as the compliment of asking my leave? —No, surely.—But, when you come, with modesty, and humility, and say “Papa, I want such a thing ; you know best whether it be proper to give it to me, or not ;—if it be, I would be very much obliged to you for it.”—This manner of asking, would be an acknowledgment of your dependance on my power, my judgement, and my love ; and would make me the readier to grant you every indulgence that I could.—But Prayer is not only good to ask blessings from God, but also, to thank him for those we have already received ; and it would be hard to expect that benefits should be bestowed upon an unthankful heart. Prayer is also useful for another purpose ; as it makes us better acquainted with God, by introducing us frequently into his presence, and reminding us of his power and goodness ; besides, that it recommends us to his love, by proving that he is often in our thoughts ; and endears him to our hearts, by constantly keeping in our minds a sense of his mercies towards us.

*Fil.* Papa, I once heard a little boy say, that it was impossible for him to love God, for that one could not love a person they never saw.—Now, papa, I was thinking, since, that the boy was greatly mistaken, there; because, I remember, when we were reading the story of poor Saint Stephen, the other day; how he was so good, and bore every thing so patiently, and even prayed for the wicked creatures who killed him;—oh, then, I felt that I loved him with all my heart!—but indeed, I was not so patient as he was, for I was very very angry with the people who stoned him:—indeed I'm sure, I could have fought for him, papa; and you know, if I did not love him, I would not do that.

*Pat.* It is all very natural, my dear; and it is by no means necessary that we should see either God, or good people, in order to love them.—It is natural, to a good mind, to love goodness, wherever it is, or has been, as in the case of yourself and Saint Stephen: but it is still more natural to love that goodness, if we ourselves have been beloved and benefited by it.

For example.—Suppose there was a great man living in some distant part of the world, who was equally good with Saint Stephen; and had also been, of a long time, my particular friend and benefactor, and, of his own free bounty, had presented me with every good thing that I possess.—Suppose you had never seen this great

great man ; but that he loved you so well for my sake, and as being my child, that he sent you large presents, by every ship, and wrote you letters, assuring you of his everlasting friendship, and giving you advice how to direct your conduct in such a manner, as would secure your happiness. Don't you think you would love this man very much ?

*Fil.* Indeed I would, papa : if I was never to see himself, sure I should see his benefits ; I should see and feel all the kindness he did to me, and I could not help loving him for it.—Besides, I think his letter would make me love him more than all the rest : it would be so good, you know, in such a great man, to write to a silly child like me.

*Pat.* It is very true, and you reason very rightly.—But, what if he was, also, to invite you to answer his letters ?

*Fil.* Oh, papa, that would be delightful !—Oh, then I would be half the day writing.

*Pat.* And what would you put in your letters ?—what do you think you would say to him ?

*Fil.* Why, I'd never be tired thanking him for all his goodness to me, and I'd beg of him to let me know what I could do, to shew my gratitude.

*Pat.* You have settled the matter very right :—but, suppose now, in addition to all his other benefits,

benefits, this great man was to write you word that, if you followed his advice, in every thing, till after a certain time, he would then send a ship for us both, and take us to himself, to enjoy his presence and conversation, and make us happy while we lived.

*Fil.* Then, papa, that would make me ten times more eager to do every thing he advised me to ; I would think nothing too much to do, for the sake of being so happy, as for you and me to live always with one who loved us so well, and was so good to us.

*Pat.* Very well ; you would be quite right. —Now, you know that God has done a great deal more for us, than I have supposed this great man to do ; —much more, indeed, than it would be possible for all the creatures in the world to do for us : it is true, you have never seen his person, but you see his benefits every day. He gave you life ; he gives you health, and friends ; it is he who clothes and feeds you, and it is to him alone you owe all things. He also has written to advise you :—here are his own kind and gracious words, in this precious book we have been reading, for the Bible is the word of God himself.—Here, then, he has written to you, and laid down such rules for your conduct, as, if you follow them, cannot fail of making you happy, even in this world, and afterwards, they will bring you to another,

and a better world, where this good God invites you to live with himself, forever and ever.— You say you would delight to answer the letters of the great man, we have been talking of:— answer then, the letters of your greater God;— not by writing, for there is no occasion for it:— answer him by prayer, just in the same way as you would have answered your earthly benefactor; beg of him to shew you how to be grateful, and to merit a continuance of his favour; and never be weary of thanking him for his benefits, or of doing your utmost in his service.

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## DIALOGUE VI.

### FILIOLOUS.

**O**, PAPA! the servants have been telling me the saddest story of Judge Severus;—he is a nasty, ill-natured, cruel creature, papa.

*Pat.* Don't be so hasty in your censures, my dear.— Judge Severus has the character of being a good, and conscientious man;—but come, what has he done, to make you think him so ill-natured?

*Fil.* Why, papa, there was a poor man, who did, to be sure, a very naughty thing, and deserved very well to be punished, if he had not repented of his fault: he stole a purse of money

to

to buy bread for his family.—So, he was found out, and put in prison :—and then he began to think of himself, and to be sorry that he did not let himself and his family starve and die, for want of bread, rather than be guilty of such a terrible fault.—So, when he was brought before the Judge, he owned his crime, and cried so bitterly, that every one pitied him in their hearts, and wished, of all things, that he might be pardoned ; but the Judge said how he must be hanged for it ; and so, the poor man fainted, and every one was in tears for him ; and now, would you think, after all this, that the Judge would have the heart to condemn him ?

*Pat.* But he did condemn him, I suppose ; did he not ?

*Fil.* Yes, papa, he did ; the nasty, cruel creature !

*Pat.* Cruel !—he could not avoid it : it was the law, and not the Judge that condemned him ; he knew very well what the law required ; he knew he deserved the punishment, at the time when he committed the crime.

*Fil.* Well but, when he repented, papa !

*Pat.* His repentance might make the Judge pity him, but could not entitle him to pardon.—The Judge who should pardon a criminal, in such a case, would be guilty of a falsehood, in the first place, to make people believe they should die for such offences, and then contradict

his own words, by forgiving them.—And, in the next place, he would surely be a very great fool, to think that any one would be frightened from wickedness by laws whose truth was not to be depended on.—It would, also, be a means of bringing the law into reproach and contempt. Innocent people would say that it was unjust, for suffering the guilty to go free ;—and the wicked would be encouraged in their crimes, if they found there was a possibility of escaping from the punishment they deserved.

*Fil.* Then, papa, if that's the case, how can God ever pardon any of us ? there is no one in the world always good, I believe ; we all want to be forgiven, sometimes ; and then—my gracious !—what will become of us, papa !—If it would be unjust and improper in the Judge, to forgive the poor man, when he repented, wouldn't it be the same in God to forgive us, if we repented ?

*Pat.* Your question is very reasonable ; as the matter appears to you, we should all be in a terrible situation, indeed ;—for God never will give his creatures room to tax him with untruth or injustice, and therefore, all those who live under the strictness of his law must be judged by it, and suffer accordingly.

*Fil.* Oh, papa dear !—and what shall we all do then ?—what shall I do ? for I have been naughty

naughty very often!—and must I be punished for ever, papa?

*Pat.* It is true, we all merit the sentence of the divine law; and therefore you, and I, and all must perish, everlastinglly, if it was not for the goodness of our God, that has mercifully provided a remedy.

*Fil.* Oh, what remedy, papa!—tell me, tell me, for you have fright'ned me sadly!

*Pat.* One that is sufficient for the sins of the whole world:—one that is such a miracle of kindness and love, that it would be hard for us to believe so much happiness, if God himself had not told and shewed it to us.—I will explain the nature of it, bye and bye; meantime, let me tell you a story, and do you listen very attentively, and remember all I say.

Once upon a time, there was a certain great and powerful king, who was possessed of very large dominions: he had also a son, a prince of such engaging qualities, that it was impossible to know, without loving him; and this prince was commisioned by him to assume the government of a part of his dominions, where the inhabitants were very turbulent, and rebellious; for the king said, “Surely when once they get my son to reign over them, his mildness and goodness cannot fail of bringing them back to their duty.”

Well;—the prince got possession of his government, and though he did not yet leave the presence of his father, except upon a visit now and then to his subjects; yet he took care to proclaim his laws amongst them, and he sent the very best and wisest ministers to rule them, in his absence;—nay more, he wrote to them, with his own hand, and begged of them, with the greatest earnestness, that they would not transgress against the laws, nor drag down punishments on their heads, by disobedience. Also, that he might succeed in persuading them to be good, he promised, out of his own purse, to reward those who continued in their duty; and, as an earnest of his promises, he sent rich and valuable presents among them, of almost every thing that reasonable creatures could have need of.—But, all that ever he could say, or do, the greater part of them continued wicked, and refractory; they paid so little respect to the laws, that it was hard for the few who were good, to live among them; for they did nothing but rob and insult their neighbours; and they spent all their plunder in rioting, and rebellion; and they laughed at the goodness of their prince, and thought he had no power to punish, because he did not immediately execute judgment against them, but strove, by mildness and rewards, to win them over to duty. The presents that he sent them were abused to the purposes of wickedness

edness and folly, or given to bribe foreigners to fight against him ; and they strove, all that ever they could, to chase away the few good people out of the land.

The prince grieved greatly to see them so obstinate ; he threatened them with punishments, at last, and sent prophets among them, who foretold the miseries they would bring upon themselves, by their wickedness.—But all was of no effect ; they laughed at some of the prophets, and put others to death, and, in short, nothing could prevail with them to cease from their accustomed sins.

At length, the voice of justice cried so loud against them, that it was absolutely necessary for something decisive to be done.—Kings, you know, should act according to the laws, or else the laws would become useless, and all the world would grow wicked, for want of rule or restraint.

*Fil.* O yes, papa, I know, by what you told me about the judge, that it was necessary for the king to punish these people : besides, they were such shocking creatures, that I do not pity them at all.

*Pat.* Nay, now, you are wrong again :—awhile ago, you would have mercy shewn to a robber, in spight of justice and the laws ; and now you will not afford, to guilty creatures, that pity which the severest justice would allow ;  
for

for justice may, and often does pity, even where the laws oblige it to punish.

*Fil.* Yes but, papa, you know the poor man who committed the robbery was very penitent for his crime ; but the people you are telling me of, were not penitent at all, but wicked hardened ungrateful creatures.

*Pat.* But a person who thinks as he ought to do, cannot refrain from pitying the most wicked the most hardened of human creatures : he will pity them for being so foolish and mad as to give themselves up to the devil, and suffer him to lead them to destruction. Thus it was that the good and kind prince of this wretched people acted.—He pitied the folly of their guilt, and wished to save them from the ruin it had incurred.—So, when the king and all the court were assembled, to pronounce upon their fate, the prince rose up, in the presence of them all, and thus addressed his father.

“ I know, O my father (said he,) that these people have sinned, and at the same time that it is not now in their power to make satisfaction ; —their lives and properties are forfeited to the law, and they have nothing wherewithal to discharge their debts, or to make atonement for their crimes, it is therefore just that the law should condemn them.

“ You remember, my father, that before I took upon me the government of this people,

“ we

" we both foresaw that numbers of them would  
 " prove rebellious ;—nevertheless, we also knew  
 " that many more would continue dutiful, and  
 " that others, even among the refractory, would,  
 " by good management and advice, repent,  
 " and return to their obedience.—It was for  
 " their sakes alone, and not for any glory of  
 " mine, that ever I assumed the government ;  
 " I wished to rule them, in order that I might  
 " save as many of them from destruction, as I  
 " could, because I knew that nobody else was  
 " either able or willing to do as much for them,  
 " as I was.

" Your subjects are always in your presence,  
 " my father, and have your person, power,  
 " justice, and goodness so constantly in view,  
 " that it is no wonder they should continue obe-  
 " dient : but these poor people have never seen  
 " you, and are scarcely able even to guess what  
 " sort of person so great a king can be.—I my-  
 " self, as yet, have been seen, only by a few of  
 " them ; but the time is now arrived when my  
 " presence would be most useful, and my com-  
 " passion most necessary to them.—You know,  
 " that, from the beginning, it was my firm re-  
 " solution to spare no pains or cost, to save my  
 " unhappy subjects :—my purpose, now, shall  
 " be manifest ;—the debts of my people shall be  
 " paid ;—atonement shall be made for their  
 " crimes ;—and your justice, my father, shall  
 " be vindicated to all the world."

All the assembled chiefs and nobles then fell prostrate before the son of their king : and they said, “ Alas ! must we lose our prince ? is “ he going to absent himself from us ?—going “ into a country of ingratitude and rebellion, “ where, perhaps, his precious life may fall a sacrifice ! but how, oh how will he make a-tonement for the numerous crimes of this “ people ?—how will he ever be able to discharge the mighty debts they owe ?”

“ I will shew you how, (replied the prince,) “ I have, long since, obtained permission from “ my father to do whatever I pleased, both “ with, and for my people, which could be “ done, consistent with justice and the law.— “ Now no subject is rich enough to pay all their “ debts ; and no subject’s life is valuable e-nough to stand in the stead of all their lives.— “ I alone am able to do all this for them, and “ I am also willing to do it : I will give up my “ whole estate to redeem them ; and my life it-self, as a sacrifice for every life among them, “ that shall be found forfeit to the law.

“ Many of them, I know, are deeply peni-tent for their fault, and many more will repent, “ in consequence of my efforts to save them :— “ I will now go, and live among them, and keep “ them company in the poverty to which they “ have reduced themselves, that I may have the “ better opportunity of teaching them how to “ become rich again.—While I am with them

“ on

“ on earth, I will teach them how to live ; and  
 “ I will lay down my life among them, for their  
 “ sakes, that I may at once atone for their  
 “ transgressions, and instruct them how to die ;  
 “ that so, when I meet you in heaven, my fa-  
 “ ther, I may meet them, also.”

“ I consent, my beloved son, (replied the  
 “ King,) I consent, and am well pleased with  
 “ your offer of mercy :—I am willing to part  
 “ with you, for a while, for the sake of our  
 “ unhappy people ; since no other but your-  
 “ self possesses the power to redeem them, by  
 “ paying the penalty of their crimes. Take  
 “ them then, my son ; henceforth they shall  
 “ no longer be called my subjects, but, yours,  
 “ for you have purchased them very dearly.—  
 “ The price you are willing to pay, is sufficient  
 “ for the purchase of them all ; and therefore  
 “ all of them who chuse it are now at liberty  
 “ to accept of your grace.”

*Fil.* O papa ! sure it is impossible that such  
 a thing ever could happen ! what !—for a great  
 prince to give away his dignity and fortune,  
 and even to lay down his life for a set of creatures  
 who had been so ungrateful to him !

*Pat.* It is indeed very wonderful, my dear ;  
 yet still, not impossible, because, such a thing  
 really did happen.—But, what would you say,  
 if some of the subjects of the prince were so  
 stupidly foolish, as to refuse the offers of his  
 mercy,

mercy, and say, “ This man was always telling  
 “ us of our faults, and pestering us with his  
 “ rules, and his advice.—We scorn to accept  
 “ of his grace ;—we will be tried by the king’s  
 “ law, and will not have this man to reign over  
 “ us.—We are good enough, and well enough,  
 “ without him, I’ll warrant ye :—the king gave  
 “ us the law, only to frighten us ;—he will  
 “ never condemn us by it,—there’s no fear.”

*Fil.* Oh, the wicked creatures ! papa !—sure  
 they had no hearts, or they could not be so un-  
 grateful !

*Pat.* So, one would think, indeed ; but they  
 went still greater lengths than these.

The prince, (out of love to his penitent sub-  
 jects, and in hopes that the rest would also in  
 time grow penitent, by his good example and  
 advice,) left the palace of his father ; left his  
 fortune, his dignity, his crown, and scepter be-  
 hind him, and went on foot, and clothed like  
 a poor man, to his government : but, because  
 he did not bring his crown and royal robes, and  
 all his pomp and grandeur along with him, his  
 wicked subjects would not believe that it was  
 for their sakes he had laid them down, but they  
 made a mock of him, and would not acknow-  
 ledge him for their prince ; for they said he was  
 poor and mean, and they would not have such  
 a man to reign over them.

So,

So, he was obliged to live among the lowest of the people ; and often to wander about in desarts, and submit to want, and distress of every kind, so that he, sometimes, had not where to lay his head.—However, though he had parted with all his outward wealth and pomp, he retained the riches of his wisdom, and the glory of his knowledge still : so, he went about doing good, even to his enemies ; and he restored sight to the blind, and limbs to the lame ; made the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak ; comforted the afflicted, and preached to the foolish, and strove to make the wicked turn from the error of their ways, and repent.

And many of the people did repent, and followed his advice, and grew good : but those who still remained wicked were so enraged to find that any one gave heed to him ; and so mad at his attempting to tell them of their faults ; that they determined, at last, they would have their revenge : so, they laid hold on him, and dragged him away ; and he would not suffer any of his followers to defend him, or make the least resistance ; for he had foreseen, all along, every thing that should happen : and he determined to go through it all, for the sake of his subjects ; that the example of his meekness, and patience, in suffering for a good cause, might lead them to imitate, and come as near his perfection as they could.

So, his wicked subjects bound him, and scourged, and spit upon, and insulted him ; and last of all, they put him to a cruel and ignominious death.—But I see, you are too much affected, and indeed, it is no wonder ; for any one who is capable of either goodness, or pity, must be moved at such a story.

*Fil.* O, papa !—did such a thing happen ?—could such a thing happen ?

*Pat.* It did, my child :—it happened in a manner much more wonderful than what I have related to you ; and you and I, and all of us have the deepest interest in the story ; for it was *our* king, who gave up his only and beloved Son, for our sakes,—it was *our* dear and precious Prince, who made himself a sacrifice, to save us.

*Fil.* What, *our* king ! *our* prince, papa !

*Pat.* Yes, the King of the world ;—the Lord of heaven and earth : it was God himself, my love, who gave his only Son, to redeem us ; and it was that dear son, whose miracle of mercy made him descend from the glory of his father, in heaven ; made him lay by his majesty, and conceal his Godhead under the form of a poor and humble mortal ; and subject himself to poverty, and anguish, and bonds, and death, for our sakes.—Here, in this Bible, the whole story is related, and you will here find all the circumstances I have told you, and many more, to the encrease of your wonder, and your gratitude.

*This*

*This* is the remedy which God has provided, to satisfy the justice of the law : the Son of God has paid, for us, all the debts and penalties it required ; and, if we are willing to become his subjects, and be thankful for his grace, through his merits, we shall obtain forgiveness ; and every sin, of which we repent, shall be pardoned, for his sake.—But if, like the rebellious subjects, we reject his mercy, and say, “ We will “ not have this man to reign over us ;—we will “ be tried by the king’s law, and not by his “ grace ;”—then, we shall find, when it is too late, that, by the law, we never could be saved ; because, as you rightly observed, we have all, even the best of us, offended against the law, and therefore, in strict justice, we all deserve to suffer.—But, the Son of God, by the sacrifice he made for us, has paid all our penalties, and purchased us from under the strictness of the law, to make us the subjects of his grace :—purchased our pardon for every fault, and every folly, of which we sincerely repent, provided we prove that repentance, by a constant endeavour to obey all his commandments.

## DIALOGUE VII.

## FILIOCUS.

PAPA, I was reading, in the Bible, ever since, about our Saviour ; oh, how terrible it is to think of all that he suffered !—to think that the Son of God should suffer death, for our sins !—sure, might not something *else* have been done ? some other sacrifice ?—something less than him !—Oh, what signified all the world, in comparison of him, papa !

*Pat.* You have now partly answered your own question. It is, because his life was, indeed, of more value than the lives of the whole world, that it was found a sufficient sacrifice, and atonement for them ; and, as this could not be the cause with any *other* life,—so, no other could suffice.

*Fil.* Oh, but why, papa ?—Sure if God pleased, he might have accepted a sacrifice of less value !

*Pat.* And how, then, would justice have been satisfied ?—Would you have God to be unjust, and untrue, in order that he might be merciful ?

Suppose, now, that twenty of the poorest of my tenantry owed, each of them a guinea, in taxes, which they had not wherewithal to pay ; and that the matter was laid before me, and justice

justice demanded on them.—Well—the poor people come crying to me, and tell me, they are in the greatest distress:—I represent this to the tax-gatherer, but he replies that, however he may pity them, justice must be done, and the laws kept up;—first, because the laws should not tell a lie, and next because they should not encourage knaves to take advantage.

In this case, now, what is to be determined on?—Suppose I say to the tax-gatherer, “Here, “ honest man, here are five guineas for you, “ out of my own purse:—take it, and forgive “ these poor people their debt.”—“ Is that your “ justice,” says he, “ a part, instead of the “ whole!—No, no;—if you have a mind, in-“ deed, to redeem these men, pay the whole “ debt for them.”

Would not he say right?—surely.—And it would be very foolish, and unjust, in me, to offer a part, instead of the whole.—What I ought to do, in this case, (if I had a mind to keep my tenantry out of the power of the law,) would be, to say to the man,—“Here, take this bank-“ note, for twenty guineas;—this *one* note will “ pay the entire debt;—take it, and let these “ poor creatures go free.”

Now, upon this very same principle of justice, it was necessary that the sacrifice offered for the lives of the whole world, should be richly worth all their lives put together; and thus it was,

that the sufferings of our Saviour redeemed them ; because, by his death, he paid the *whole* of their debt, and did not stop at a *part*, or leave any thing for justice to murmur at.

You will perceive that I do not mean to lessen the greatness of the subject, by comparing it with smaller matters :—it is in order to make you understand me, the readier, that I make comparisons with things which are familiar to your knowledge.

*Fil.* I thank you greatly, papa ! indeed you make every thing very plain and easy to me. Oh, what a good God was our God ! papa. Sure, we can never do enough, to shew our gratitude to him !

*Pat.* You say what is very true, my love ;— and our gratitude rises still higher, when we think of the innumerable benefits we derive from the sufferings of our Saviour ; for, besides the necessity of atonement, or satisfaction, to the law ; there were also *other* reasons why his love to fallen man made him submit to be born and die on earth, for our redemption ; and one of them is, because none but himself could have done so much for us, in many other instances, both in life and death, as he did.

If any human creature, any thing, in short, less than God, had been in his place,—we could never have had so perfect a rule of conduct, and example of life, as those which our Saviour

left

left us.—Besides, the world would, then, have had some excuse to cavil, and say, that they had no right to follow the example of one who was a *man*, like themselves, and therefore subject to a possibility of erring, and leading them into error.—But, *here*, we have no such excuse to plead.—It was the Son of God, himself, who walked before us in the path of righteousness and salvation;—whose instructions call us to wisdom,—whose patience reconciles us to suffering,—whose meekness invites us to humility,—and whose truth and mercy assure us of reward:—whose whole life was a lesson of virtue, and his death an example of fortitude.—A GUIDE, WHO CANNOT ERR, leads the way, in order that we may have confidence to follow him, without either doubt or fear.

*Fil.* Papa, don't you remember, you promised to explain to me, what was meant by saying, that *the seed of woman should bruise the serpent's head.*

*Pat.* I did; and I will do it now.

We are all, you know, of the seed, or offspring of Eve, the common mother of mankind.—The manhood, or mortal body of our Saviour, was born of a woman, the descendant of Eve, and therefore was properly called the seed of the woman. He it was whom God then ordained, and promised, to bruise the head of the serpent, or devil, who betrayed our first parents; and it was,

was, also, said that the serpent should bruise his heel; by which is meant, that Christ should so far break his power (as is expressed, by *bruising his head, or noblest part,*) that he should not be able to do any thing more than *bruise the heel of Christianity.*

Thus, you see that our dear Redeemer presented himself a sacrifice for sin, in the moment when sin was first committed; and satisfied the demands of justice, as soon as the penalty was incurred.—So that he is not merely the Saviour of those who came into the world, since the time of his death, upon the cross; he is equally the Saviour of all the children of Adam, who will accept of his salvation: because his atonement was ordained from the beginning; promised to the first pair who sinned, and, in them, to all their offspring; and this is the reason why he is called in scripture, “ the Lamb, who was “ slain from the foundation of the world.”

But, besides all that I have already told you, there are, doubtless, many *other* advantages, which we derive from this instance of the wonderful love of our Redeemer;—as also, many *other* reasons why no sacrifice but that of his death could save us.

*Fil.* And can't you tell me them all, papa?

*Pat.* Indeed, my love, I cannot; because I don't know them myself. Many of them, no doubt,

doubt, are such, as human creatures, like us, would be quite unable to comprehend.

*Fil.* But why should we be unable, papa?

*Pat.* Because, our nature is imperfect, my dear; and, while we are in this life, we never can rightly conceive all the wonderful ways of God.

*Fil.* I could not understand rightly, may be;—but sure, *you* could, papa.

*Pat.* Observe now that you have owned your knowledge, wisdom, and judgment to be inferior to mine.—Why are you of this opinion?

*Fil.* O, papa, sure, because you are learned, and a man; and I am only a silly child, that must wait a great many years, and be taught a great deal, before I can know as much as you do.

*Pat.* Very well; if you acknowledge me, for this reason, to be wiser than you are, don't you think it also likely that God is wiser than either of us?—Surely, if it would be foolish to compare your judgment with mine, it would be a hundred times more foolish to compare my judgment with that of the God who made me.

*Fil.* But could not God tell us, and teach us to know every thing, papa?

*Pat.* If ever we become blessed angels, he may, and probably will teach us all the wonders

of

of his love ; but while we are human creatures, we are incapable of such exalted knowledge.

You requested me to instruct you in Sir Isaac Newton's philosophy, the other day : do you remember the answer I made you ?

*Fil.* Yes, papa ; you made me sensible how I was too young and ignorant yet, to be instructed in that great book ; and that I must learn less things first, before I could be able to understand it ; because, children's knowledge must grow up, by degrees, along with their years ; they must learn their letters, before they can spell, and spell before they can read, and so on, from one thing to another.

*Pat.* Very well remembered.—You are then sensible that it is only as children advance in years, they become capable of advancing in knowledge.—A child of four years old, would not be capable of learning what might be taught to a child of ten ; and one of ten years old, though he might be very clever, of his age, yet could not be made to understand every kind of instruction, like a man.—Now, as you allow a great difference, in this respect, between a child and a man ; you must allow, for the same reason, a much greater difference between a man and an angel.

You have often asked me questions, upon a variety of subjects ; and I answered as many of them, as I could make you comprehend : but there

there were many more, unanswered, which I knew you were too young to comprehend ; and therefore I promised to inform you in them, when you arrived at a riper age.—You believed me ;—did you not ?

*Fil.* O, yes sure, papa.

*Pat.* And why did you so ?—why did nothing tempt you to suppose that those questions could not be answered, and that I was only putting you off ?

*Fil.* O papa, sure I could not suppose that ; because you never told me a lie, in any thing. Besides, I know very well, there are a great many subjects which I cannot understand, 'till I grow up, and get wisdom and years, like yours.

*Pat.* Just in the same manner we should think in regard to God : we are all less than the silliest children, in comparison with our heavenly Father ; he has instructed us, in all we are capable of knowing, in this our human state ; when we become angels he may explain to us the rest ; and in the mean time, we may very well take his word, whose word is truth itself.

*Fil.* So we may, indeed ; and so I will too.—But, I want to know, who is the Holy Ghost, papa !

*Pat.* The third person in the Trinity, my dear ;—the Holy Spirit of God, whom he sends to strengthen his creatures ; to put good thoughts and desires into their hearts, and enable them to

fight

fight with, and subdue their great enemy, the devil.

*Fil.* And is he God, too, as well as our Saviour?

*Pat.* He is. Nothing less than God could create us, as our heavenly Father did.—Nothing less than God could redeem us, as our blessed Saviour did;—and nothing less than God could sanctify or make us good, as the Holy Ghost does, whenever we are willing to accept of his assisting grace.

*Fil.* But, how can that be, papa?—Sure there is but the one God: how can one God be divided into three?—If you divide one into three, sure then, it is not one any more.

*Pat.* Even in this world, there are many objects in which we find three united in one:—for instance:—observe that sun, which shines upon us, so brightly:—you see his light;—you feel his heat;—you are also sensible that there is a body which produces this light and heat, and you perceive that they both act with very agreeable, but very different effects.—Still, however, you know, there is but *one* sun.

*Fil.* And is it in the same manner that the Trinity are joined, papa?

*Pat.* We know not in what manner the Trinity are united, my dear. Such knowledge is above our comprehension; it is sufficient for us to be told, and to know, that they all three do  
really

really exist, in this wonderful union, without being also informed of the *manner* of that union. God the Father created us,—that we know, because in, and by him, we live, and move, and have our being.—God the Son redeemed us;—that we also know, because, otherwise, Almighty Justice could not have permitted us to hope for pardon.—And, that God the Holy Ghost sanctifies us, is equally evident, since, without him, we should not be able so much as to think a good thought.

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### DIALOGUE VIII.

#### PATERNUS.

WHAT was that, you and your school-fellow were disputing about?—You seemed to be high in argument.

*Fil.* Why, papa, I was talking to him of all that you told me, and I could not get him to listen, or mind me, at all.—Besides, I am afraid he is a bad boy, for he said things that put me quite out of patience with him.

*Pat.* Tell me, were *you* ever naughty in your life?

*Fil.* O, yes, indeed, papa; and I was very sorry for it.

*Pat.* Aye, but, if God had been out of pa-

tience with *you*, you would not have lived to be sorry for it.—He would have given you up, and left you in anger, as you left your school-fellow, just now; and then, then the devil would have taken you, and punished you forever, in hell.

*Fil.* Papa, I did not think it was any harm to be angry at wickedness.

*Pat.* Anger, in every instance, is bad, my dear: no good ever did, or ever can come of it.—We may, and ought to dislike and hate sin, but we must not hate the sinner.

*Fil.* But, how can we hate the sin, without hating the sinner, papa?

*Pat.* Suppose your school-fellow, instead of being a bad boy, was only ill of some painful and loathsome disease,—would you hate him then?

*Fil.* O no, papa, I would pity him then, greatly.

*Pat.* He is much more an object of your pity, now; for we are easier to be cured of our sickness, than of our sins.—But, though you would not hate him for being sick, you would hate his disorder, for making him sick,—would you not?

*Fil.* Yes, indeed I would.

*Pat.* Well, in that case, you could contrive to hate the disease, without hating in any degree

gree the person who was ill of it.—Why then could you not, for the same reason, have a hearty abhorrence of sin, without feeling any aversion to the unhappy creature who was under the influence of it?—It is only in this manner we are permitted to hate sin; and, in this manner we may do it, you see, even out of love to the sinner.

*Fil.* But, papa, are we, then, to be as much friends with bad people, as with good?

*Pat.* By no means.—At least, not the kind of friendship you mean. We should wish them extremely well, and do them all the good in our power; but we ought not to associate with them, for fear we should be corrupted by their example: just as we ought not, unnecessarily, to keep company with a man in a mortal fever, for fear of catching the disease.

It is certainly our duty and our interest to seek the society of the good, in order that we may benefit by their wise and pious example:—but, at the same time that we shun the company of the wicked, we ought not to allow ourselves in any aversion towards them.

We are all sinners, in some degree, or other; and yet God, you see, bears with us, and continues his goodness towards us, in hopes that we may at last repent. Now, if God bears with our faults, we ought, surely, to bear with the faults of our fellow creatures.

Besides, when we consider the great love that our Saviour has shewn to the whole world, sinners, and all :—how he died to redeem them, and still leaves no means of mercy untried for their reformation :—when we consider all this,—how shall we dare to hate, or be angry with creatures, who are so dear to our God ?

But come, what was it your school-fellow said, that made you so out of humour with him ?

*Fil.* Why, papa, in the first place, he would not mind one word of all the good things you were telling me, for I was striving to make him as happy as I was by hearing them :—but that was not all, for he talked very naughty.

*Pat.* Well, I don't want you to make complaints, or tell tales ; but, if he said any thing that raised the smallest doubt in your mind, I wish to be informed of it, that I may clear up the matter to you.

*Fil.* Then, papa, I only want you to tell me, does not God know our thoughts ?—because he said that God could not be acquainted with our thoughts.

*Pat.* He should rather have said that it was impossible for God to be ignorant of them.—Surely, he who gives us thought, must know what thought is about.—He who made us, must be

be perfectly acquainted with every part of his own workmanship.

For this reason, we ought to watch carefully over our hearts, that no evil inclinations may enter therein; since the eye of God is for ever upon us,—sees us through and through,—and will perceive that we are naughty, in having a mind to be so, though it should not be in our power to be guilty of the action.—God is the constant witness of our thoughts, as well as our actions, and will judge us, as certainly for the one, as for the other.

*Fil.* But, if a bad thought comes in our head, sure it is the devil who put it there, and then the fault is *his*, not *ours* :—if we don't do what the thought bids us, sure, then we are not to blame!

*Pat.* If we don't indulge the thought, we are not to blame, indeed, neither are we in much danger from it. The devil has no power to do any thing more than introduce bad thoughts into our hearts: it is in our power to make them welcome, or not, just as we please. If,—as enemies to our Lord, and Saviour,—we turn from them with disgust, and strive to banish them from our minds, the spirit of God will help us in this good work.—But if, on the contrary, we make them welcome, cherish, and harbour them, we then give convincing proof

that we love the wicked enemies of God, and of our own souls.

*Fil.* But papa, indeed now; I often wished in my heart to get rid of a naughty thought, and could not, it stuck to me so.

*Pat.* Well—when you find the same difficulty again, go directly to your room or any private place, and fall on your knees,—or if you can't do that, raise your heart, on the instant, to God; and pray to him earnestly, that he would grant you his help, and make his spirit strong within you.—Then, call to mind your danger; call to mind that it is the devil who is, at that moment, endeavouring to make you as great a devil as he is himself,—and that, if he succeeds to gain you over, even for an instant, you don't know but, in that very instant, you may die, and so be lost for ever.—These reflections will rouse you to such exertion, that, with God's grace to help, your enemy will be driven away, and your heart restored to peace.

*Fil.* Aye, but would the enemy come back again, papa?

*Pat.* Alas, my love! he will indeed!—often, often will he return, and often must we renew the fight;—but then, it is ourselves, our souls, that we fight for! If we throw down our arms, and suffer ourselves to be made prisoners to the devil, eternal, never-ending misery and torment must be our portion. But if we fight manfully,

manfully, and come off victorious, a crown of glory will be our reward, and we shall be lifted up to the society of angels, and the presence of our dear Redeemer, there to dwell for ever and ever ; free from all the vexations and infirmities of this perishable world, and blessed with the enjoyment of more than every desire that our hearts would be able to form.

*Fil.* O then, papa, I wish I was to die now, while I am good, for fear I should ever grow naughty again.

*Pat.* But are you sure that you are now good, and fit to die ?

*Fil.* Yes indeed, papa, for I feel, this minute, that I love God, more than all the world, and that I would not for all the world offend him.

*Pat.* So Saint Peter thought, at the time when he said to our Saviour, that, though he should die with him, yet he would not deny him ; you know, however, that he did deny him, notwithstanding. We are poor weak creatures, my love, and are not acquainted with ourselves. We may compare our minds to the diseased bodies of those who go to Bath and Bristol for their health.—Suppose a man, there, under the care of a good and skilful physician, who thus addresses him :—“ Sir, your disorder is such as cannot be removed in a day or two ;

two ;—your cure will take time, and you must wait with patience.—You must not grow tired of the rules I lay down for your recovery, nor desire to leave this place, before your cure is perfected.—It is very possible you may sometimes feel a little flash of health, which, to your inexperience, will have the appearance of cure :—but your disorder, nevertheless, will return again ; therefore, take care how you suffer yourself to mistake the nature of your case, or attempt to remove from a situation which alone can establish your recovery. Leave it all to me ;—I will engage, if you take my advice, to restore you to perfect health ; and, when that is done, I will send you home, happy and rejoicing.”

Now, we all come into the world, with our minds full of weakness and disease ; this world is our place of cure, and God is our physician.—God alone knows when we are sufficiently well to leave it, and go home :—we must observe his rules ; we must wait his time, and depend upon his wisdom ; and not mistake little starts of goodness, for the perfect recovery of our minds, nor wish to leave the world till he sees us fit to leave it.

*Fil.* Papa, I want to ask you about repentance. That little boy said, awhile ago, that it was foolish to talk of repenting and being good,

so young ; and that it was time enough to repent, when we grew old, and were tired of the world. I told him, that none of us could foresee whether we should live to be old, and that it was dangerous to run the venture.—But, I believe, there is another reason, too, why we should not delay repentance, but encourage it, whenever it comes into our minds, for fear it should not come again :—because, you told me that it was only the Spirit of God who could send such good thoughts into our hearts ; and then, you know, if he sends his good thoughts over and over again, and that we turn them away ; he may grow angry at last, and never send them any more.

*Pat.* Kiss me for that, my darling ! Now, I see that you mind, and lay instruction to heart. You have argued extremely right ; and your argument proves more than the truth of what you say, for it proves that the good Spirit of God is growing very fond of you ; and you ought to increase your gratitude to him, for enabling you to understand so well, and think so justly.

But, besides what you have said, in favour of speedy repentance,—there is, still another argument to be urged.—When a man delays this good work, it is, of course, because he wishes to go on in his sins. Now, such a man may be justly compared to one going a journey ;—directed

refted right on his road, but deserting it, because he sees *another* path that is smoother, and more flowery than that which leads to his journey's end.—When this man steps but *a little* out of his road, he would have but *a little* way to go back again:—*then* would be the time for him to consider the folly of turning his back upon the place he wants to go to;—*then* would be the time for him to repent, before he loses his way entirely.—But if, on the contrary, he goes on, wandering without a guide; he gets, at last, to such a *great* distance from his only right road, that he despairs of ever being able to travel such a length of way back again.

Thus does it fare, with many a sinner.—When repentance is delayed too long, there are so many sins to be repented of, that few have the resolution to set about it.

But, there is this material difference between the traveller, and the sinner;—the one loses only the object of *worldly* pursuit;—but, the other loses heaven!—loses an eternity of happiness, and in its stead finds an eternity of torment prepared for him.—Death overtakes him, in the midst of his wandering through the paths of sin, and then there is no return.

*Fil.* Papa, that foolish boy said, how there was no fear of him to die, for he was stout and strong; and so young, too, that he would certainly live a great while:—but he may die, for all

all that, poor creature!—he may take the small-pox, or a fever, you know;—or, his little horse may throw him;—or a hundred things might happen, that would be able to put an end to him.

*Pat.* Nay, how many, in perfect health, have suddenly dropt down dead! how many have gone to bed, in perfect security, and waked only to eternity.—Besides, death is not all that the sinner has to fear. Even though death should be delayed, yet judgment—the last judgment may overtake him:—that great and terrible day of the Lord, of which he himself has told us, that we know not the hour when it may come, suddenly, upon us.

Oh, then, my child! let us make haste to be good, in time!—now,—this instant, let us call upon God!—now, and every future hour of our lives, let us dedicate to his service, that so we may entitle ourselves, through the merits of our Redeemer, to live with him in glory.

F I N I S.



